CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

SECRET/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY

615457

COUNTRY	Indochina	REPORT NO.	25X1A
SUBJECT	Democratic Republic of Vietnam Handling of Rice and Salt	DATE DISTR.	4 March 1954
		25X1C NO. OF PAGES	2
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT NO.	RD
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	

THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

25X1X

SOURCE:

1. The policy of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) is to take rice from the people in the French-controlled zone as a tax. Since the people in many areas do not get sufficient protection from the Franco-Vietnamese forces, they are obliged to give rice to the DRV in order to be left alone. The rice thus collected is carried by laborers to the nearest DRV base. In areas close to French military posts, the DRV hides the collections in underground caches until the post is raided by the DRV forces, which carry off the rice.

2. Since 1949 the DRV has been promoting a policy of self-sufficiency in regard to rice, and to further this aim the Ministry of National Defense established an organization called the "Economic Sub-Sufficiency Planning Committee".

3. In implementing the policy of this committee the DRV, in 1950, deforested a considerable amount of land on which two types of farms were established. The first type of farms were those established by the Administrative and Resistance Committees (ARC's). Prisoners of war were used as laborers and the output was used to supply prison camps and ARC's. The second type of farms were those organized by the High Command, using requisitioned laborers. These "military farmers" were provided with hand grenades for protection; in areas near forests they were given a few rifles for protection against animals. At first the DRV had a great deal of trouble in requisitioning laborers for these farms. Although the people were willing to fight in the DRV army, they were reluctant to become "military farmers". The DRV finally had to give Interzone officials the right to requisition laborers. In 1952, additional areas were deforested in the vicinities of Thai Nguyen (N 21-35, E 105-50), Tuyen Quang (N 21-48, E 105-14), Chi Ne, and especially in Interzone IV. Some of these military farms cover as much territory as fifty mau (3,600 square meters to the mau).

SECRET/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY   25X1A

4. In 1952 the DRV had, to a great extent, solved the rice problem. In the High Regions, for example, there are many areas which now produce two crops a year. Although the people in the DRV zone still do not have enough rice for their needs this is not a serious problem. They supplement their diet with corn and sweet potatoes.

5. The DRV has no salt supply problem.[1] There is enough for the people, troops, and export. The DRV sends salt to China as partial compensation for Chinese war aid.

6. Salt is obtained from the salt marshes in Cau Giat (N 19-09, E 105-07), Van Ly (N 20-07, E 106-18), Cho Con, and Quat Lam (N 20-13, E 106-23). These areas are all under DRV control and have always provided sufficient salt for the entire DRV zone.

7. There are no salt marshes in Interzone Viet Bac; the salt comes from Interzones III and IV. It is packed in bags and carried by mobilized civilian laborers from Kim Tanh and Bai Thuong (N 19-54, E 105-22) in Interzone IV to Hoa Binh, and then to various provinces of the Viet Bac.

25X1A

1. �this as of April 1953 the DRV Zone did not lack salt; however, ▒ in June 1953 that there had been a severe shortage of salt since the black market was repressed in the Viet Bac and that the civilian population was obtaining its supply from that smuggled across the French-controlled zone.